Evaluating Navy Quality of Life Programs: What is Our Customer Telling Us?

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Presentation at the Second Annual Manpower, Personnel, & Training Research and Analysis Conference

14 Feb 2002

Overview

★ **Research background**

 Results and Conclusions

★ **Strengths of Studies Examined**

 Challenges

 Potential Future Directions

Overview

★ **QOL is important because…**

- *"I intend to lead a Navy that holds quality of service for Sailors, for their quality of life and their quality of work, as a top priority in mission and combat readiness.*" (CNO, 2000)

- MWR, FSC, Housing, and Child Care programs have significant impact on continuation rates (Koopman & Goldhaber, 1997)

- Non-work QOL needs appear to have a stronger impact on retention than work-life needs (Wilcove, Wolosin, & Schwerin, 2001)

- *It's the right thing to do!* - Covenant Leadership

 Objective

- Compare various sources of QOL data taking a comprehensive look at program use, satisfaction, and impact

Research Background

★ **MWR Customer Survey (Rosenfeld & Uriell, 2000)**

- Random representative sample mail-out survey
- Survey measure:
    - Core set of items focused on MWR program use, perceptions of program quality, and satisfaction
    - In-depth program evaluation of several selected programs
    - Outcomes: readiness, retention plans, overall QOL

 QOL Domain Survey (Wilcove & Schwerin, 1999)

- Random representative sample mail-out survey
- Survey measure:
    - Evaluation of satisfaction with 12 life need areas and impact of needs on military outcomes
    - Outcomes: readiness, retention plans, Global QOL

Research Background

★ **FSC Need Assessment Survey (Kerner-Hoeg et al., 1996)**

- Random representative sample, command distributed

- Survey measure:

  – Examined program use and satisfaction

  – Outcomes: readiness, retention plans, overall QOL

 QOL Program Evaluation (Schwerin et al., 2001)

- On-site program evaluation completed by program users

- Survey measure:

  – Patron ratings of how well program met their needs (i.e., *Reasons for Being* or RFBs)

  – Patron ratings of program quality

  – Outcomes: readiness, retention plans, overall QOL

Results: Navy QOL Program Use and Satisfaction

Use and Satisfaction of Navy Quality of Life Programs
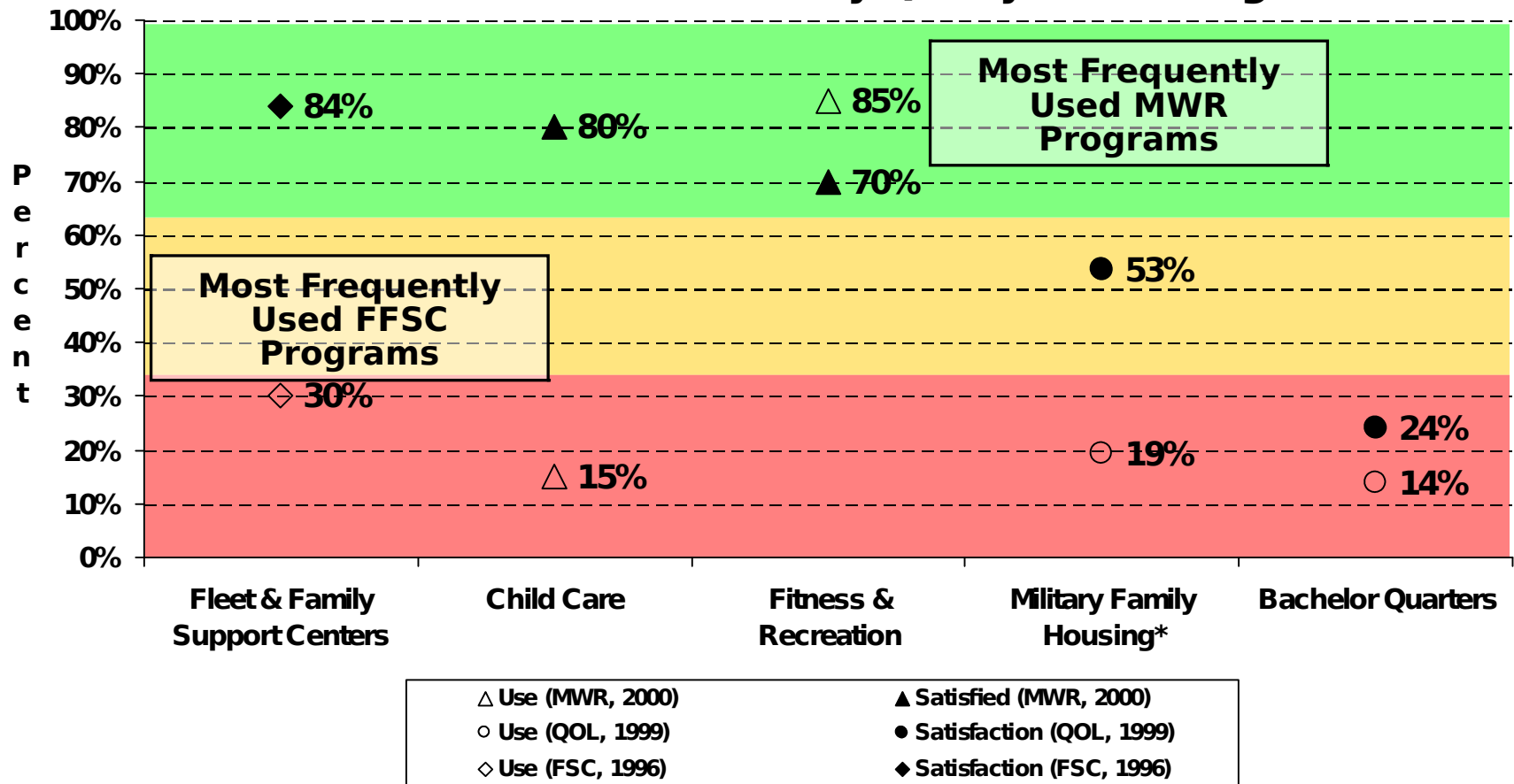
NOTE: The above rankings have been sorted by the percent of Sailors who used the listed Navy Support Services in the past year. The color bands on the graph are used to indicate level of satisfaction—with green representing high, yellow representing moderate, and red representing low levels of satisfaction.

Military Family Housing includes On-base MFH and MFH in the civilian community.

Evaluating QOL Programs: Linking Programs to Outcomes

Results: Program Impact on Readiness

Percent rating the program as *"Important"* or *"Very Important"*

Percent

100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%

MWR: 64% (Officer), 63% (Enlisted)
Military Family Housing: 53% (Officer), 57% (Enlisted)
Bachelors Quarters: 53% (Officer), 54% (Enlisted)
Fleet & Family Support Centers: 52% (Officer), 59% (Enlisted)
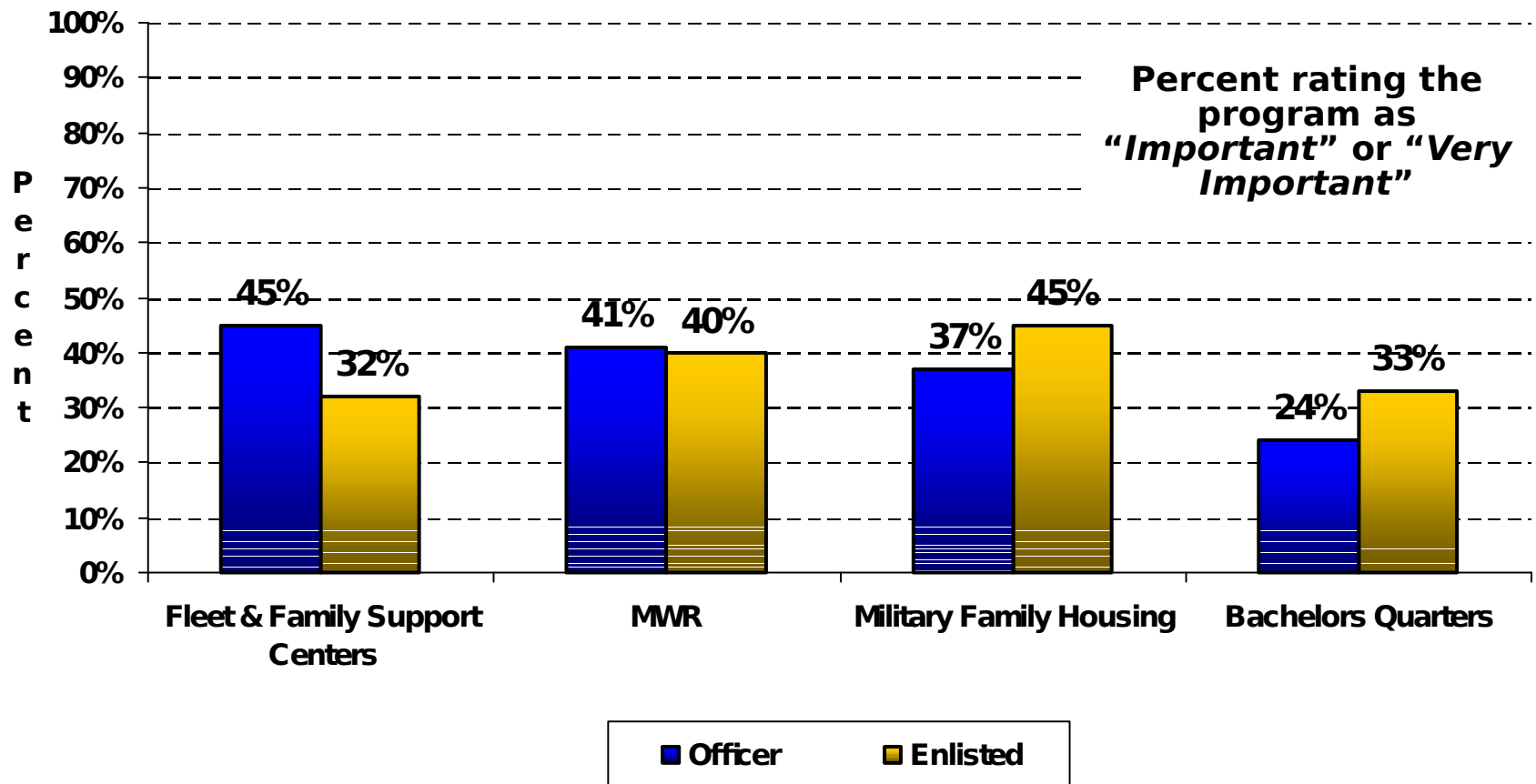
■ Officer   ■ Enlisted
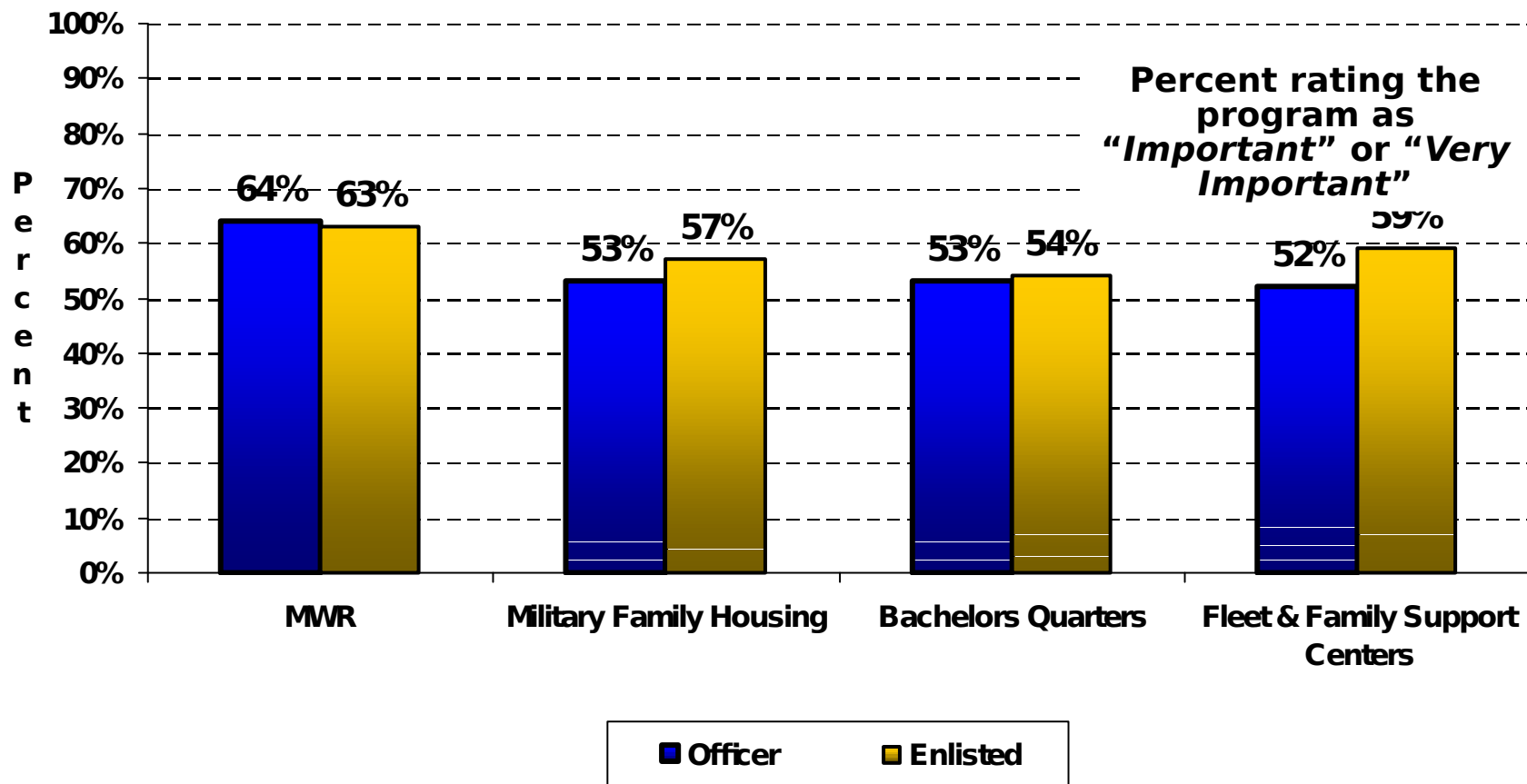
NOTE: The above ratings are from the 2000 MWR Customer Survey, Question 36: "Rate how important each program is to doing your Navy job (readiness)."

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Results: Program Impact on Retention Plans

Percent rating the program as "Important" or "Very Important"

Chart data (Percent):

Program	Officer	Enlisted
Fleet & Family Support Centers	45%	32%
MWR	41%	40%
Military Family Housing	37%	45%
Bachelors Quarters	24%	33%

Legend: ■ Officer ■ Enlisted

NOTE: The above ratings are from the 2000 MWR Customer Survey, Question 37: "Rate how important each program is to your decision to remain in the Navy."

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Results: Program Impact on Readiness and Career Intentions

★ **QOL Program Evaluation (Schwerin et al., 2001)**

- **Multiple Regression used to…**

  - Examine the strength of relationship between each program and outcomes

  - Identify RFBs that were leading predictors of the outcomes

  - Learn more about impact of program quality on the outcomes
    - Indicators:
      - ➤ RFB item scores
      - Program quality mean score
    - Outcome measures: Readiness and Career Intentions

  - Percent of variance accounted for indicates strength of relationship (greater than 35% is considered "*strong*")

Results: Program Impact on Readiness and Career Intentions

★ **For QOL program users, strong relationship between program meeting patron need and readiness**

▢ **Relationship between programs and career intentions much lower (some non-significant)**

Program*	Readiness (R^2)	Career Intentions (R^2)
Child Development	.43*	.08*
Fitness & Recreation	.56*	.08*
Clinical Counseling	.55*	.05
Financial Management	.54*	.13*
Relocation Assistance	.48*	.15*
Transition Assistance	.42*	.06*

$p < .05$

NOTE: The above ratings are from the 2001 QOL Program Contributions to Readiness and Retention.

*Military Family Housing and Bachelor Quarters were not included in this program evaluation.

Conclusions

★ **Majority of Navy Support Program users *satisfied* with program**

- Satisfaction with MWR and FFSC high

- Satisfaction with Housing (MFH and BQ) lower

 QOL programs believed to affect readiness and retention plans

- MWR Customer Survey

  – Majority of those surveyed *agree* that programs affect readiness

  – Approximately 1/3 *agree* that programs affect retention plans

- QOL Program Contributions

  – Strong relationship between program meeting needs and readiness

  – Marginal relationship between programs and career intentions

Strengths of Studies Examined

★ **Studies examined all used random, representative samples of Sailors**

- Exception: QOL Program Contributions focused on program users

★ **Each study is focused on their primary research area yet includes questions that allow for cross-program comparisons**

- Findings demonstrate a convergence of results

 Best practices shared

Challenges in QOL Research

- **Measuring military/organizational outcomes**

  - How consistently do we conduct outcome-based research? Most major studies include military/organizational outcomes

  - Readiness

    – Do Sailors know what it is when we use it in a survey question?

    – Do WE know what readiness is?

  - Retention

    – Short-term intent (next 3 years) vs. Career Intentions

    – Intent vs. behavior: Is intent the outcome of interest?

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Potential Future Directions

★ **Complement ratings of subjective QOL with objective indicators of QOL**

Examine minimizing dissatisfiers of QOL rather than increasing QOL - Canadian Defence Force

- Barriers to QOL, job satisfaction, or organizational commitment

- Look at reducing QOL program dissatisfaction

Deploy one measure that captures customer satisfaction data for a broad range of Navy Support Programs

- Would facilitate comprehensive study (using CNA approach) to quantify return on investment
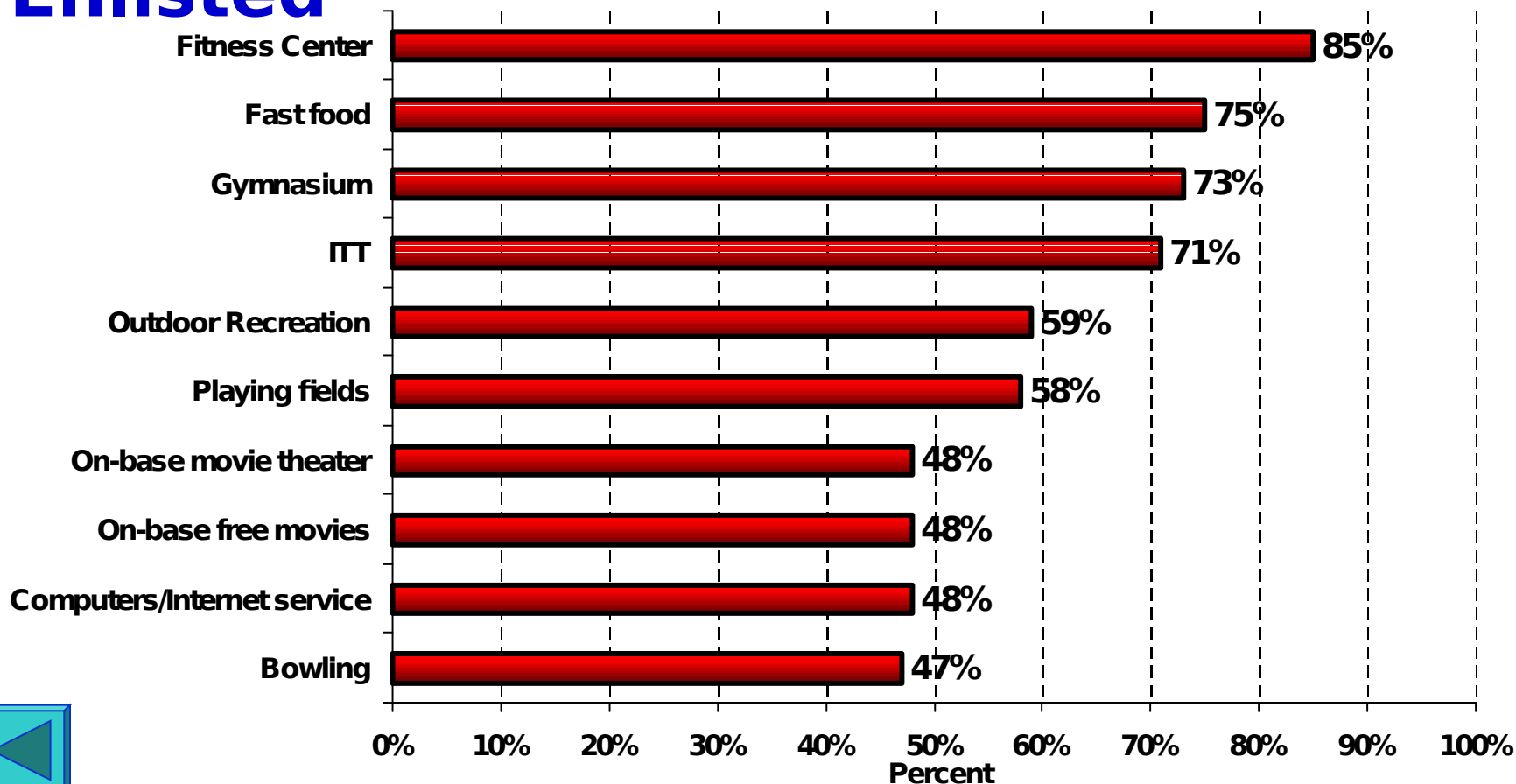
References

References

★ **Kerner-Hoeg, S., & Baker, S. (1996). *1996 Navy Family Service Center Needs Assessment*. Fairfax: Caliber & Associates Briefing Presentation.**

☐ **Kerner-Hoeg, S., & Baker, S. (2000). *2000 Navy Leader Needs Assessment*. Fairfax: Caliber & Associates Briefing Presentation.**

☐ **Rosenfeld, P., & Uriell, Z. A. (2000). *Navy Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) Customer Survey: Summary of Results*. Millington: Navy Personnel Research, Studies, and Technology (PERS-1) Briefing Presentation.**

☐ **Schwerin, M.J., Michael, P.G., & Glaser, D.N. (August, 2001). *Evaluating Navy Quality of Life (QOL) Programs: Linking Programs to Outcomes*. Paper presented at 110th American Psychological Association Conference, San Francisco, CA.**

☐ **Wilcove, G.L., & Schwerin, M.J. (2001; *in press*). *1999 Navy Quality of Life (QOL) Survey: Summary of Results*. Millington: Navy Personnel Research, Studies, & Technology (PERS-1) Technical Report.**

☐ **Wilcove, G.L., Wolosin, D. G., & Schwerin, M. J. (August, 2001). *Development of New Navy Quality of Life Model Using Structural Equation Modeling.* Paper presented at 110th American Psychological Association Conference, San Francisco, CA.**

Back-up Slides

The opinions expressed are those of the authors. They are not official and do not represent the views of the U.S. Navy.

Use of Navy MWR Facilities/Services: Officer and Enlisted

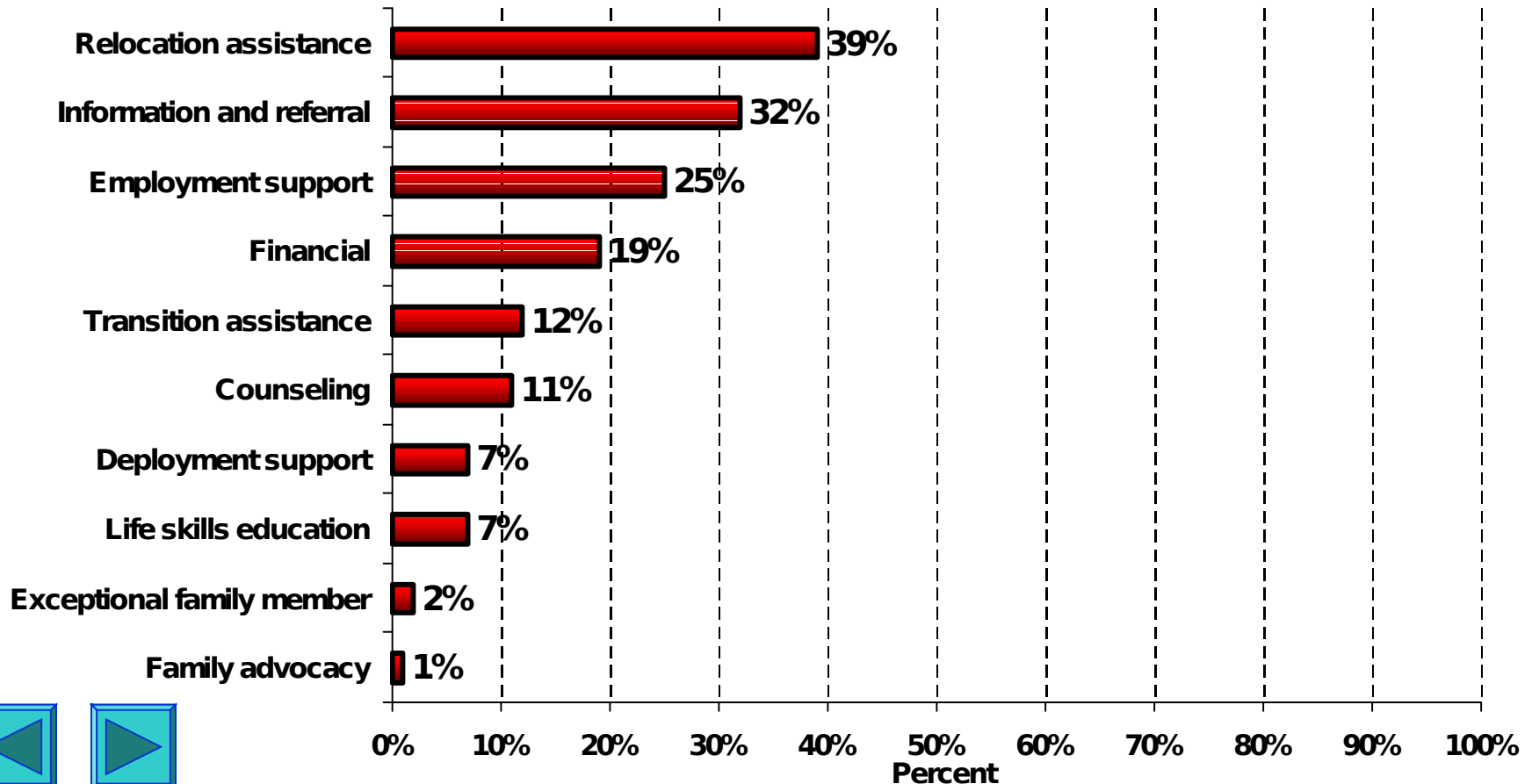| Facility/Service	Percent
Fitness Center	85%
Fast food	75%
Gymnasium	73%
ITT	71%
Outdoor Recreation	59%
Playing fields	58%
On-base movie theater	48%
On-base free movies	48%
Computers/Internet service	48%
Bowling	47%

Percent

NOTE: The above ratings are from the 2000 MWR Customer Survey, Question 15: "Indicate whether or not you regularly use each facility/service listed."

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Use of Navy FFSC Programs: Officer and Enlisted

Program	Percent
Relocation assistance	39%
Information and referral	32%
Employment support	25%
Financial	19%
Transition assistance	12%
Counseling	11%
Deployment support	7%
Life skills education	7%
Exceptional family member	2%
Family advocacy	1%

Percent

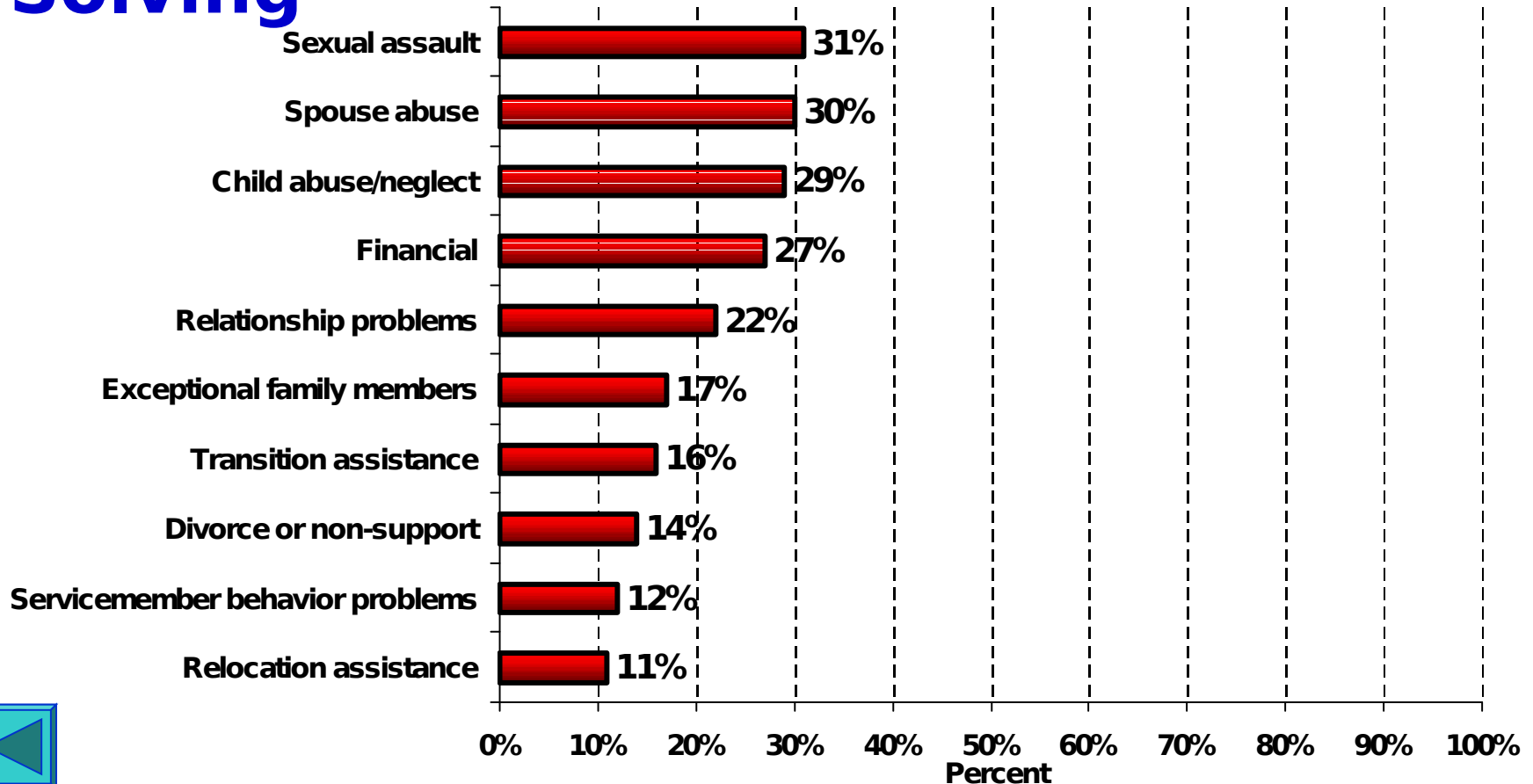**NOTE: The above ratings are from the 1996 FSC Need Assessment Survey, Question 14, 39, 47, 51, 56, 58, 62, 64, 65, 74, : "If you needed the following service during this assignment, did you USE it?"**

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Servicemember Issues that Leaders Need the Most Help Solving

Issue	Percent
Sexual assault	31%
Spouse abuse	30%
Child abuse/neglect	29%
Financial	27%
Relationship problems	22%
Exceptional family members	17%
Transition assistance	16%
Divorce or non-support	14%
Servicemember behavior problems	12%
Relocation assistance	11%

Percent

NOTE: The above ratings are from the 2000 FSC Leadership Survey, Question 19: "Of the issues listed above, which would you need the most help in solving?"

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